



## Independent Scientific Review Panel

for the Northwest Power & Conservation Council  
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### Memorandum

May 26, 2011

**To:** Fish and Wildlife Committee Members, Northwest Power and Conservation Council

**From:** Eric Loudenslager, ISRP Chair, and Erik Merrill, ISRP Coordinator

**Subject:** ISRP Retrospective Review Approach for 2011

### Summary

The Fish and Wildlife Committee's feedback is requested on the ISRP's proposed approach and topics for a 2011 ISRP retrospective report. The ISRP suggests the 2011 report expand upon and further summarize the review of results that the ISRP conducted as part of its programmatic and individual review of projects in the Artificial Production and Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation Category Review (AP and RME Category Review Report; [ISRP 2010-44](#)).

### Background

In drafting this memo, we looked at the Council's [May 17, 2011 DRAFT decision document](#) for the *Review of Research, Monitoring and Evaluation and Artificial Production Projects*, and specifically the section on Programmatic Issue 1: *Reporting and use of project and program results*. We found the draft decision document instructional on how we might shape our 2011 and future retrospective reviews. One message we gained from the memo and our discussions with the Council regarding our final review of AP and RME Category projects is that the Council would like to improve results reporting in general and increase the visibility of our reviews of project and program results.

The ISRP and its Executive Committee discussed this several times over the past few months. We agree with the basic approach laid out in the draft decision document and strongly support the strategy to report on a subset of the Fish and Wildlife Program's projects annually. In addition, we have identified two primary approaches to address the need for improvement. First, we will highlight the "results review" aspect of our current reviews, summarize the results of projects and programs when feasible, and relate those results and the overall findings to the Fish and Wildlife Program. For example, we have titled a soon to be released review, "An ISRP Retrospective Report: Review of the Lower Snake River Compensation Plan's Spring Chinook

Program.” That report looks at the results of the various spring Chinook hatchery production programs, includes a summary table of those results, and provides conclusions and/or recommendations for future actions based on those results. The report will be presented at the Council’s June 7, 2011 meeting. Second, the ISRP will develop annual retrospective reviews that summarize the review, implementation, and biological results from a subset of the on-the-ground projects and monitoring, evaluation and research elements that were reviewed in the previous year. The ISRP would design this review consistent with the Council’s draft Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Reporting (MERR) plan and to inform the proposed “High-Level Indicators” report and the Council’s annual report to the Northwest Governors on Fish and Wildlife Program expenditures (see [www.nwcouncil.org/library/2010/2010-06.htm](http://www.nwcouncil.org/library/2010/2010-06.htm)). This second type of report is what is proposed in this memo.

Below, we describe the ISRP’s retrospective review charge and the ISRP’s past efforts to comply with the charge. The Council’s draft decision document does a good job describing those items, but descriptions are given here for added context and to alleviate the need to access and refer back to the decision document. These background pieces are followed by a specific draft proposal for the ISRP’s 2011 retrospective report.

### ***The Retrospective Review Charge***

In addition to reviews of proposed projects, the 1996 amendment to the Power Act, Section 4(h)(10)(D)(iv), directs the ISRP, with assistance from the Scientific Peer Review Groups, to review annually the results of prior-year expenditures based on the ISRP’s project review criteria and submit its findings to the Council. As stated in the Council’s 2009 Fish and Wildlife Program, “the retrospective review should focus on the measurable benefits to fish and wildlife made through projects funded by Bonneville and previously reviewed. The ISRP’s findings should provide biological information for the Council’s ongoing accounting and evaluation of Bonneville’s expenditures and the level of success in meeting the objectives of the 2009 Program, as described in the monitoring and evaluation section. Also as part of the ISRP’s annual retrospective report, the ISRP should summarize major basinwide programmatic issues identified during project reviews.”

### ***Past ISRP Retrospective Reviews***

The ISRP has complied with this retrospective charge in three basic ways.

#### ***1. Proposal Reviews***

A major element of the ISRP’s reviews of ongoing projects, such as for the recently completed AP and RME Category Review, is an examination of each project’s reporting of past results consistent with the retrospective review charge. The proposal form specifically asks for a concise summary of biological results, a discussion of the adaptive management implications of those results, and notice that the ISRP will use the information submitted for its retrospective review. In addition to review comments on each project, the general sufficiency of results

reporting and incorporation of project accomplishments into future planning is summarized by the ISRP in the programmatic section of category and geographic reviews.

## *2. ISRP Retrospective Reports*

The ISRP has released three distinct “retrospective” reports. In 2005, the ISRP completed its first retrospective report, *Independent Scientific Review Panel’s Retrospective Report 1997-2005* ([ISRP 2005-14](#), August 2005). The report focused on programmatic issues and observations identified in ISRP reviews dating back to the ISRP’s first report in 1997. In 2006, the ISRP’s review of Fiscal Year 2007-09 proposals included an examination of the results reported by ongoing projects. The ISRP reported the results of that analysis in its *ISRP 2006 Retrospective Report* ([ISRP 2007-1](#), March 2007). The ISRP’s *Retrospective Report 2007: Adaptive Management in the Columbia River Basin* ([ISRP 2008-4](#), April 2008) focused on how projects are changing their objectives, strategies, and methods based on learning from the results of their actions. The ISRP accomplished this by looking at themes that emerged in previous ISRP retrospectives, examining a subset of projects that were reviewed in Fiscal Year 2007, and investigating how proponents applied the results of their past projects to proposed future actions and monitoring.

## *3. ISRP Review of “Retrospective” or “Synthesis” Reports drafted by Project Proponents*

The ISRP has reviewed a number of “retrospective” reports that were produced by proponents of long-term, ongoing projects. Some of these reports were requested by the ISRP in a specific project review; see the *ISAB and ISRP Review of the CSS Ten-Year Retrospective Summary Report* ([ISRP 2007-6](#), November 2007). Other examples include the Lower Snake River Compensation Plan Spring Chinook Program review and ISRP follow-up reviews of the Select Area Fisheries Enhancement Program, the ODFW John Day fencing program, and the Grande Ronde model watershed habitat restoration effectiveness report.

## **Topics for 2011 Retrospective Report**

The Council’s draft decision document and the ISRP’s FY 2011 Statement of Work identifies the need for the ISRP to consult with the Council staff to scope topics and approaches for a 2011 retrospective report. The ISRP recognizes that retrospective reports need to be conducted in the context of other concurrent efforts that track results of the Fish and Wildlife Program. Specifically, as described above, the Council is developing its own annual report to Congress and the four Basin state governors on the Program’s progress toward fish and wildlife mitigation and recovery using high level indicators. In addition, the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority (CBFWA) issues an annual report of the status of the resource, and the Bonneville Power Administration has made progress on project tracking through Pisces and Taurus. These efforts and the ISRP’s retrospective review share a target of not only reviewing the results that are currently reported but establishing a systematic and meaningful reporting of project results as a central feature of the Fish and Wildlife Program.

The ISRP also understands that retrospective reports should be scoped to best inform Council decisions such as project reviews or program amendments. The ISRP suggests the next retrospective employ results from projects reviewed in the Artificial Production and Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation Category Review. Because the Council has made or will have made funding recommendation on those sets of projects that generally last for the next three to five years, the ISRP's review will be designed to inform the next program amendments, the next project reviews, and refinement of the Council's Research and MERR plans.

From the set of ongoing projects that the ISRP reviewed in 2010, the ISRP suggests scoping the following sets of projects for further review of results:

*1. Artificial production - supplementation monitoring and research*

In the AP and RME Category Review, we noted that many of the Fish and Wildlife Program's supplementation-related research, monitoring and evaluation projects have begun to show results for one or more generations of fish. For the retrospective review, we would examine the projects to see how these results inform best hatchery practices, specifically the use of supplementation for various populations, and the status of the overall hatchery RME efforts to monitor program success and address critical uncertainties. In addition to informing program development, this review would be designed to inform the Council and other regional managers as they scope the tasks and need for the proposed Columbia River Hatchery Effects Evaluation Team (CRHEET). Programmatic Issue 4, *Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and effects of artificial production actions*, in the Council's draft decision document provides additional context for a review. Several ISRP members are scheduled to attend the Yakima Fisheries Program's conference this June, which should provide excellent information for a retrospective review of that complex program.

*2. Hydrosystem passage monitoring and research*

The ISRP and ISAB have a long history of reviewing mainstem passage monitoring projects, and much progress has been made. A retrospective review would highlight some of the key findings from these efforts and some emerging issues that could confound results (tagging effects and expression of various life histories).

*3. Viable Salmonid Population status and trends monitoring*

The ISRP partially covered this in its Anadromous Salmonid Monitoring Strategy (ASMS) review ([ISRP/ISAB 2011-1](#)). The ISRP reviewed numerous projects that inform VSP monitoring in the AP and RME review and did not have enough time or information to determine if the projects were designed to collect data that would result in analyses with sufficient confidence levels. An ISRP review of this could be useful, but it would also be a challenging task for the ISRP to evaluate the sufficiency of the projects to accomplish the Basin's task of VSP status and trends monitoring. Consequently, this may be a topic that the

Council and Action Agencies should assign to the co-managers or a contractor then have the ISRP provide a short retrospective evaluation of the results reported. The timing of any such review will need to take into account the most current version of the ASMS and the newly drafted Coordinated Assessment, which describes how data will be shared to inform the VSP parameters under the ASMS. The next iterations of these two documents are scheduled for public release in August 2011.

In addition, the ISRP's 2011 report may touch on some longstanding programmatic issues such as ISRP reviewer impressions on the use of subbasin plans to justify on-the-ground projects and how the plans might be improved in the future. The ISRP hopes to scope and begin a retrospective review related to the topics above by July 1 and to complete a review in October 2011 before the next category reviews are underway. Council feedback on scoping the review and prioritizing topics are welcome.

For 2012, the ISRP will specifically highlight findings on results reporting in its categorical reviews, and the ISRP anticipates retrospective reviews of synthesis reports for estuary habitat restoration and monitoring, ocean research, and the Integrated Status and Effectiveness Monitoring Program. To the extent feasible, the ISRP recommends the approach of asking the project proponent to produce summary or synthesis reports of their results and for the ISRP to review those.

# Independent Scientific Review Panel

## Approach for 2011 Retrospective Report

June 7, 2011

Eric Loudenslager, ISRP Chair  
Erik Merrill, ISRP and ISAB Coordinator

# ISRP Review Responsibilities

1. Projects proposed for Bonneville funding to implement the Council's F&W program
2. Retrospective review of program accomplishments
3. Projects funded through Bonneville's reimbursable program



*Klickitat River, Washington*

# Retrospective Review

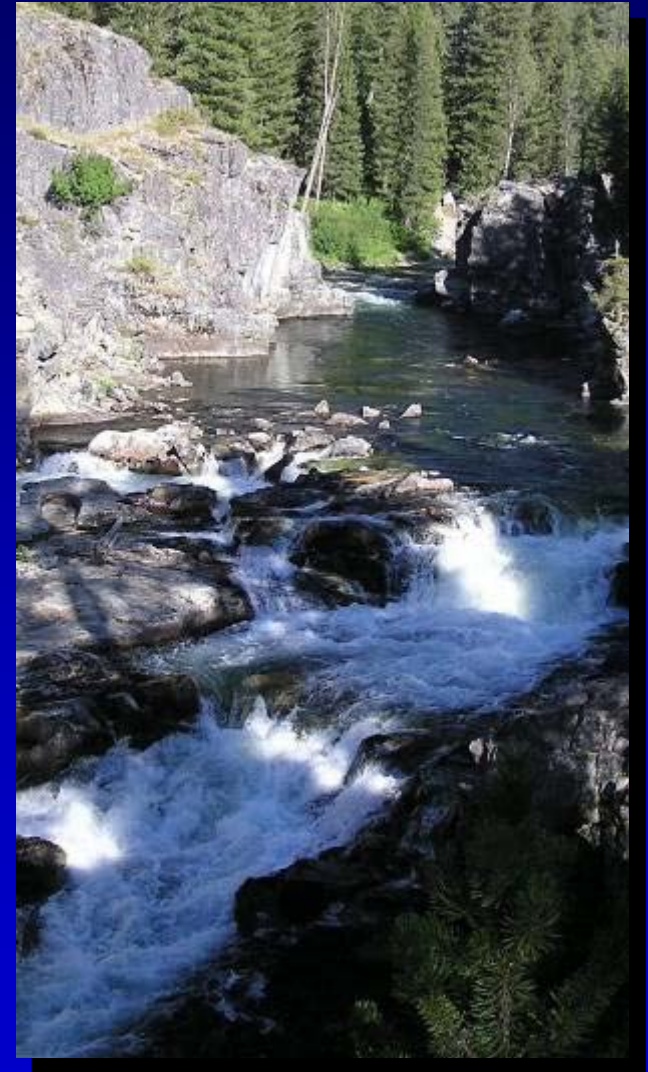
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Review the results of prior year expenditures:

Focus on measurable benefits to fish and wildlife

Provide biological information for the Council's evaluation of the success in meeting program objectives

Summarize ISRP province review efforts and identify major basinwide programmatic issues



*Dagger Falls, Middle Fork Salmon*



# Retrospective Review Approaches

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Evaluate results reported in proposals

Programmatic comments that accompany multi-project reviews

Formal "Retrospective" reviews (three to date)

Review synthesis reports from project proponents (LSRCP, SAFE, CSS, Umatilla) – *preferred approach*



*Wanaket Wildlife Management Area*

# Formal Retrospective Reviews

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1997 – 2005: Programmatic Themes

2006: Analysis of Results Reporting in 07/09 Proposals

2007: Adaptive management actions



*Bighorn Sheep, Middle Fork Salmon*

# 1997-2005 Retrospective

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- A summary of ISRP activities from 1997 to 2005
- Evaluates the cumulative effect of our reviews on program accountability, project effectiveness, and scientific soundness
- Two parts:
  - ISRP review process and results
    - *Lessons from an evolving process*
  - Major programmatic themes
    - *RM&E, mainstem issues, tributary habitat, artificial production, wildlife, ocean and estuary*



*Lostine River, Oregon*

# 2006 ISRP Retrospective

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Results Reporting in FY  
2007-09 Proposals

M&E Guidance to Improve  
Habitat Restoration  
Reporting

Summary comparison of FY  
2007-09 ISRP Review with  
Council Recommendations  
and the 2001 – 03 Provincial  
Review



*Asotin Creek*

# 2007 ISRP Retrospective

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***How are projects changing based on learning from the results of project actions?***

**Adaptive Management**

**Using Project Results**

**Fish Production**

**Aquatic Habitat**

**Wildlife**



*Umatilla River below WID*

# 2011 Retrospective Topics

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**Artificial production –  
supplementation RM&E**

**Hydrosystem passage  
RM&E**

**Viable Salmonid  
Population status and  
trends monitoring**

**Programmatic issues  
such as subbasin plan  
use and improvement**



*Fishing at Lyle Falls, Klickitat River*